



## The Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness

Chairman Dan Burton (R ~ IN)

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### CHAIRMAN BURTON CONTINUES ONGOING INVESTIGATION INTO VACCINE SAFETY AND EFFICACY

#### - ***"THE SV-40 VIRUS: HAVE TAINTED POLIO VACCINES CAUSED AN INCREASE IN CANCER?"*** -

Washington, D.C. – Immunization to protect children and adults from infectious disease is one of the greatest public health advances of the twentieth century. However, no immunization is without risk. It has been widely acknowledged that millions of Americans may have received contaminated polio vaccines. Those vaccines contained the Simian Virus 40 (SV-40), which is capable of causing cancer. There is however, great dispute over how many Americans received the tainted vaccines, and when the hazardous contaminant was finally removed.

As part of his ongoing investigation into vaccine safety and efficacy, Congressman Dan Burton (R-IN), Chairman of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness, will hold a hearing entitled, ***"The SV-40 Virus: Have Tainted Polio Vaccines Caused an Increase in Cancer?" The oversight hearing will be held on Wednesday, September 10, 2003, in Room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building at 2:00 p.m.***

The development of the Salk Polio Vaccine in 1955 and the Sabin Polio Vaccine in 1962 were significant medical achievements because of the devastating toll of death, disability, and suffering that polio caused. Initially, the tissue cultures being used came from the kidneys of the macaque monkey, about 60 percent of which are infected with SV-40. In the early days of polio vaccine production, the laboratory tests that were available could not detect the SV-40 virus. At least 26 other simian contaminants were detected and eliminated, but SV-40 slipped past the quality control testing procedures and was inadvertently introduced into the vaccine pool.

Government scientists thought that all polio vaccines used after 1963 were free of the SV-40 virus. However, SV-40 was spotted in childhood brain tumors in 1992, and in 1994 it was discovered in rare forms of bone and lung cancers. A growing number of scientists and parents now believe that the government did not ensure the purity, potency, and safety of some polio vaccines, and that a breach of public trust has occurred. Due to the controversy, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) commissioned an independent report by the Institute

of Medicine (IOM) to provide objective assistance in reviewing emerging immunization safety concerns.

The IOM report, published in October of 2002, concluded that the evidence was inadequate to conclusively establish whether or not the contaminated polio vaccine caused cancer. The IOM committee did recommend continued public health attention to the matter in the form of further targeted biological research.

## WITNESSES:

### **Panel one**

#### **Food and Drug Administration Representative (Invited)**

#### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Invited)**

##### **Dr. James J. Goedert, M.D.**

Chief, Viral Epidemiology Branch and Senior Investigator  
National Cancer Institute and  
Capt., U.S. Public Health Service  
Rockville, MD

### **Panel Two**

##### **Ms. Barbara Loe Fisher**

Co-Founder and President  
National Vaccine Information Center  
Vienna, VA

##### **Ms. Eileen Grebinski**

Mother of an injured child  
Brick, NJ

##### **Mr. Stanley P. Kops, Esq.**

Attorney at Law  
Bala Cynwyd, PA

##### **Dr. Adi Gazdar, Ph.D.**

Hamon Center for Therapeutic Oncology  
University of Texas Southwestern Oncology  
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